

# The BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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OCTOBER 29, 1922

## When is a Joke Not a Joke?

BY FLORENCE ELLIS SHELBY

ONE day Dad happened to be sitting out in the car, waiting for Mother to come out. The boys were talking on the other side of the hedge but Dad paid no attention till the word "Hallowe'en" caught his ear.

"What's this?" he said to himself. "Some big lark, I bet my hat." And a twinkle just like a boy's twinkled in Dad's blue eyes. "Ought to honk my horn and warn 'em about eavesdroppers, I suppose," he chuckled.

Next minute, though, he heard Wallie say, "It'll be far the funniest thing we ever did, won't it?" and he never thought another thing about honking.

"But where'll we get the paint?" came next from Bobbie, in a worried tone.

"O, Rush Peters can get some in his father's shop," someone else volunteered. And now Dad listened sure enough. Were they going to paint the town red, or what were they up to?

The remarks which came drifting through the hedge only added to the puzzle. "Lucky the horse-lot is back of the barn." And "I don't believe the old mare will make a peep, do you, kids?" Then Bobbie's voice cut in with one of his funny puns "Just so she don't say, 'Neigh, neigh,' we should care." The boys had a good chance to catch the spy right then, for he nearly laughed out. But they were so tickled themselves they were off guard.

"This is more curious than ever" thought Dad, "what could an old horse know about Hallowe'en? Those boys are going to borrow her and go off somewhere." And he frowned thoughtfully, wondering if it was all right.

Here Wallie began again, "But won't old Stinky Stump open his eyes, when he finds a nice white horse in his stable next morning?"

Then Dad began to "get wise"—so this was the Hallowe'en stunt they had planned, was it? They were actually going to paint old crippled Williamson's mare, were they?

Of course Dad knew the boys called Barney Williamson with his peg leg, "Stinky Stump"—at least in private. And truly he was anything but an agreeable neighbor; but to take it out on his poor, innocent, half-starved horse—that didn't appeal to Dad a little bit. It was likely to kill the creature too. What should he do about it?

But if boys hate some things, fathers hate some things too. And this particular father did hate to be "hated". How could he manage to turn the trick on the boys, and save his own face?

After a bit mother came out and they drove off to town. But he never said a word about what he had heard. Dad was that way; he never said anything till he knew exactly what he wanted to say, sometimes not even to mother.

This time it took him three days to think up his speech and Hallowe'en less than a week off too. Then a perfectly dandy idea popped into his head. It happened this way.

There was a widow with several children living in an old place just at the end of the business street—old Mrs. Morris. She ran a sort of shop in her front room and they lived in the back. Mr.

and Mrs. Compton often tried to help the poor soul out by buying something of her. But this was not as easy as it sounds because she kept only a jumble of cheap stock, and a few stale grocery supplies.

Mother had even begged Dad to go in sometimes and show her how she might fix the place up and make a paying business of it. But Mrs. Morris was ignorant and stubborn and she couldn't see but that things were good enough just as her husband left them years before.

So it was when he was going home past the dingy, discouraging place that at last he thought of the answer to the question that had been worrying him ever since he overheard the scheme the boys were hatching for Hallowe'en.

"I'll get a bunch of the Scouts out home tonight, and put it up to 'em" he thought delightedly.

That evening when he had them all perched comfortably on the porch, he began: "Boys, I sent for you to guess me a riddle." It was great sport to watch their eyes widen like circles around a stone dropped into the water. This wasn't the first time Dad had stacked a bunch of boys on the wide railing and wadded the rest into the hammock. And just as sure as he got them fixed up into nice shape that way, he sprung something that made them open their eyes and semi-occasionally their mouths also.

"Are you ready? Well, here's the riddle—'When is a joke not a joke?'"

The boys were afraid to guess. "He's got something up his sleeve" whispered Wallie. And he had, all right.

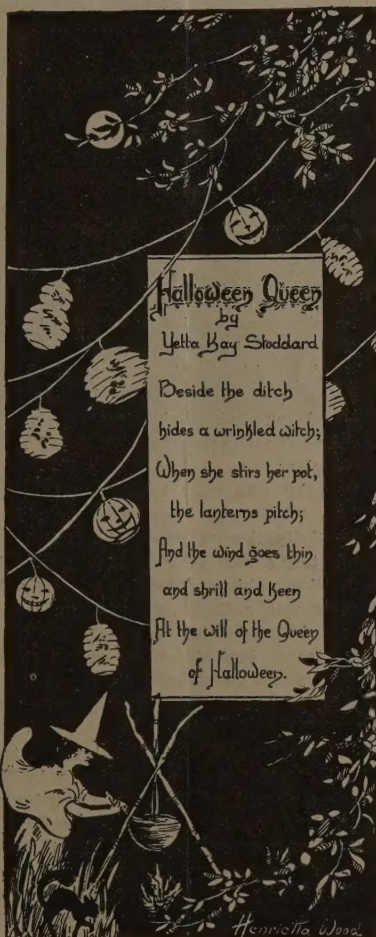
"Go ahead; guess," he urged. "Do you give up without trying? You're dead easy!"

The boys chuckled and nudged, or sat silently staring. "What do you say?" Dad repeated teasingly. "Speak out."

"Give up, give up" one or two of the boys began rather lamely, and then the rest all hollered "Give up", exactly as if they had been playing "Follow the leader."

Father stood there a minute or so smiling into their eager, puzzled faces, "It has two answers" he began. "And you boys can't guess either one. I'm ashamed of you. Honestly I am. A quick-witted bunch like you too. Why I wouldn't be surprised to see an old spavined mare step all over you-all."

"Who in the world told you, Dad?" exclaimed Wallie.





"Told me what? The answer to 'When is a joke not a joke'? Why nobody did. You all gave up. I've got to tell you. It really has two answers, too; which is all the more disgrace to a troop of scouts.

"In the first place 'A joke is not a joke' when it is a *mean trick*. Neither is 'a joke a joke' when it's a *Boy Scout's 'good turn'*. See?"

The whole lot of them snickered, and squirmed, and ducked their heads, and waited. Then father went on and told them how he had overheard them planning to paint old Stingy Stump's neglected mare; but that wouldn't be a joke, boys—it would be a mean trick.

"I hated to spoil your fun, so I kept still a while. But today I thought of another *joke*, a sure enough one, that I want you to swap yours for. And this 'joke' of mine won't be exactly an answer to the riddle either, because it would be such a fine and dandy 'good turn' for a scout."

"Gee! What is it?" "Go on quick!" A vigorous chorus came from the boys now.

"Listen then, what do you say to slipping over and painting Mrs. Morris's shop, instead of that poor old horse?"

"O we couldn't, could we?" "She'd hear us." "Where'd we get enough paint?" They had found their tongues—and such a hub-bub! "You'd have to have ladders to do that, Dad." "Say, boy, don't you wish we could put that across?" "She's every bit as stingy as old Stingy Stump himself. I bet she'll scrape it off and sell it, if we do paint it, don't you?"

Finally Dad had to call order. "Listen! I'll see about the paint; I think some of the 'dads' will put up for that. Then you can borrow several ladders and hide them up here. I think we better get Rush Peters' father to go along and boss the job. It will be bright moonlight you know. Each one of you will have to bring his own brush."

"But she'll be sure to hear us, Dad; and then she'll come out and run us off," began Bobbie doubtfully. "And if we couldn't make it a surprise it wouldn't be any fun for Hallowe'en," said Wallie dolefully.

"Just you wait, my boy. Mother and I are going to take her and the children to the country. We have been promising for some time to take her to see several farmers around here, who I believe would be glad to supply her with potatoes, apples, etc., for the store this winter. So we'll just hike out on Hallowe'en night; and the Brownies can come while we are gone."

From that minute the plans sprung up like mushrooms. Everything worked out fine. The boys nearly had a fit till they got Dad and Mother started when at last the evening for their prank had really come. And if Mrs. Morris and her forlorn little brood of chicks had not been so completely overcome with the very idea of an automobile ride, they

might have wondered why so many folks came out to see them start.

It didn't *just happen* either that they got back so late that night that all the little Morrisises were lopping over fast asleep in the car. The moonlight was glorious.

"My land!" exclaimed Mrs. Morris, as the car stopped in front of her shop. "How *white* everything looks in the moonlight!"

No one noticed the silent group of Brownies huddled across the street. "Brownies" are seldom ever visible to mortal eyes anyhow. Joe Morris ran in ahead of his mother, "Jiminy crickets! It's *paint*, Ma!" he hollered back. "Look at it, will you."

"My sakes! Ain't that splendid! However did it come? Heaven only knows how had it needed it!"

"Ma, it's Hallowe'en. That's what done it," burst out Joe of a sudden.

"Sure, and we went off never thinking a thing about it. Why them boys might have carried off the whole place. It looks awful nice though don't it Mrs. Compton?" The boys' kindly prank seemed to have really touched the dismal down-at-the-heel shopkeeper. "I'll have to get them windows cleaned tomorrow," she went on, "and fix up inside a bit to match all that finery."

"Yes, and you better have an eye out for those boys," chuckled Dad. "They might be up to some more mischief. Good night."

And so those Boy Scouts learned the answer to Dad's riddle, "When is a JOKE not a JOKE?"

### Told by the Tea Leaves

BY WINIFRED ARNOLD

"WELL, for once," announced Dorothy delightedly, "we've got a really good joke on Miss Webster. I guess it's the first time since she came to the High School that we've caught her napping, but we certainly have this time."

Father and Mother Brown both looked up and showed their interest, while Brother Tom promptly demanded full particulars.

Dorothy was only too happy to give them. "Why, you know we are writing little daily themes now," she explained, "and today she gave us for our subject, 'the making of tea.' And she said that it was a 'long and arduous task!' What do you think of that, Mother? Why tea is just about the easiest thing in the world to make, isn't it? I wish she could just see you sometimes." She laughed merrily.

Father and Mother Brown laughed too, but there was a curious twinkle in Father's eyes as he did so. "Do you know, daughter," he said, "I don't really believe that your mother ever saw it made—let alone making any herself."

Dorothy's mouth flew wide open in her surprise. "Why Father Brown!" she

cried, "Whatever do you mean? Mother not make any tea? Why to my knowledge she has made oceans and oceans; and you knew her long before I can remember anything at all."

Father's eyes kept on twinkling. "Yes," he said slowly, "but she didn't happen to be with me when I saw that tea made. Let's see, Mother, it was two years before we were married that I took that trip to Japan, wasn't it?"

"Oho!" cut in Tom, "I begin to see daylight, Sis. And I believe the joke's on you instead of Miss Webster. She meant the thing that Dad saw in Japan, not what Mother does—didn't she, Dad? And was that 'long and arduous', should you say?"

"I certainly should," answered Father. "Not that I saw all the steps on any one consignment—I wasn't in Japan long enough. But I saw enough to appreciate the rest that I was told."

"First, you see, there is the picking. The bushes are perfectly flat-topped if they have been properly pruned; and up above this flat top there are two or three new shoots with leaves and buds. These shoots the coolie women pick off, working just as fast as they can, with both hands going at once."

"Then these green leaves are taken away and spread out in the withering-houses, which are open sheds filled with shelves and shelves, covered with a sort of sack cloth, on which the tea leaves are spread in thin layers."

"When the leaves are withered sufficiently, they are put in a machine and rolled and rolled for about twenty minutes, just as you might roll them in the palms of your hands. Then the coarse leaves are separated from the fine through a sort of wire sieve."

"Then the two grades are carried off to a long dark room, kept fairly cool, where the leaves are laid out in squares to ferment. This process doesn't take long—only a few hours—but it is in this time that the leaves turn from green to the sort of rusty brown color that we know."

"Then comes another rolling, followed by a trip to the firing-machine, where it is fired or cooked two or three times until it is quite dry."

"Last of all come the sorting out of various grades again and the packing and blending and packing again before the tea can appear in our stores."

"All that!" gasped Dorothy. "Well, no wonder Miss Webster called it a long and arduous task! I shall look on every tea-pot with immense respect after this."

"Better look that way on Miss Webster," laughed Tom teasingly. "Also Father who has saved you the long and arduous ask of looking up all that stuff for yourself."

IF ANY man empties his purse into his head no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.—Franklin.





### Wild Nomads of the Western Crags

BY FELIX J. KOCH

ONE of these days, when you are traveling West and have a bit of time to spare, quit the railway at just about the loneliest, most remote station in the Rockies the conductor can find for you, hire a "mountain canary"—as the country-folk call their burros—to take you as deep into the wilder mountains as the little creature can; then continue on, as far as time allows you, among the uppermost peaks and cliffs and crags.

Mountains will then become very different things to you than they have ever been before.

Back at school, you'll remember, we learned that a mountain was a sloping body of land rising at least 1,000 feet above the sea. We learned such terms as "base" and "side" and "peak", and we drew on the blackboard what was very nearly a picture of a pyramid, except that the sides sloped along rather gently rather than rising directly in line.

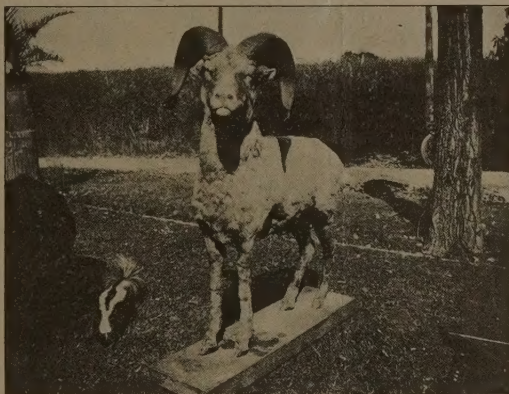
When we come to the actual mountains, however, especially the upper American Rockies, we shall soon find that a mountain often consists of *valleys*; that in climbing up we often have to go down, down, down into great chasms and gulches which must be crossed to get up higher and yet higher on the slope; that sometimes we must actually crawl on ticklish ledges; that we must guard against rock-fields starting sliding beneath us; in short, that climbing a high mountain is often just a matter of advancing from crag to crag.

That any living thing should make its home here and live to really good age without slipping and plunging to its

death in unfathomed abysses, seems incredible; but such is, indeed, the case with our good nomad friend, the mountain-sheep.

Nature fitted this animal (now very nearly extinct, so much has it been the object of the sportsman's pursuit) with every possible qualification to live among just such surroundings as these.

The great horns, as you may see from



A Mounted Specimen of the Mountain Goat

the picture, are perhaps the most pronounced feature of the animal. These often measure two feet and ten inches around the curves. Sometimes, in fact, these horns will even bend forward and downward to such a degree that they actually prevent the sheep from feeding on the ground. These horns are so built as to be what is known as resilient,—that is, to stop a shock and bounce off whatsoever may hit them. Because of this, a big ram, weighing sometimes as much as 300 pounds, may make a headlong leap from a crag that would be fatal to any other animal, land on his horns, come to his feet and walk away unhurt, absolutely beyond pursuit by his foe.

Nature has given the mountain sheep a coat which is as warm as the downiest blanket; yet, unlike the wool of our meadow-sheep, does not "catch" at every rock and ledge in its way. That is, the mountain sheep has hair rather than fleece. This is rather coarse and crimped slightly, but away down near the roots there is a soft fur that serves further to keep even the youngest lambkin warm.

In color, these sheep are a light, grayish-brown, with grayish-white visible beneath the surface should a stiff wind raise the hair. Thanks to this, they camouflage with the rocks and stones and it is almost impossible, at times, to see them.

The male is a great deal like the familiar farmyard ram, while the female is more like the swift antelope. There is just one,—rarely two,—lambs at a birth, so that, traveling among the wild crags, a mother sheep can give all her attention to the one child or the twins. These are born in June or July, when the snows are largely gone from below the snow-line, where the flocks are then, and so the baby sheep do not run the risk of taking cold, or slipping off such ledges as these shown in the picture.

More than all that, the mountain sheep is by nature wild and shy, so that it is seldom, if ever, tempted to come where its foes might reach it with half-way ease; as a result, until man brought the gun to the uppermost crags, few creatures of the upper highlands were safer or better able to pursue their simple lives in real peace than these wild mountain sheep of the crags.

### The Cock-oo Clock

BY BLANCHE ELIZABETH WADE

SAID proud Cockalorum to Town Clock-alarum,

"All summer you told the wrong hour,  
And tried to make all the good people  
about,

Believe you are right in your tower.

"But, O, you can never fool Roosters like me,

However you cry with your bell!

For Roosters of course, were made long  
before Clocks,

And learned by the sun, time to tell.

"And now that at last you are set back  
an hour,

It proves very clearly to me,

The world has come back as I knew that  
it would,

To my way of thinking, you see!"

JOHNNY—"Say, paw, I can't get these 'rithmetic examples. Teacher said somethin' 'bout findin' the great common divisor."

Paw (in disgust)—"Great Scott! Haven't they found that thing yet? Why, they were huntin' for it when I was a boy."—*American Boy*.





## THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

The very first message to reach the Beacon Club this autumn is from one of our loyal members in London who joined our Club in 1914. In a letter to the Editor she writes as follows:

Just now we are holiday making in Norfolk. We are living in a bungalow on top of a slight hill from which we can look right out to sea. We are three miles from a railway station, in the midst of farm lands where harvesting is going on very busily; nearly all the corn is stacked now and many farmers are beginning to plough.

In July, Flora Shepard, one of my first Beacon correspondents, came to stay with us, on her way to France. She was with us for a week and we had a very jolly time; it was very interesting to get to know her personally and we also found it very interesting to take her about and show her

the places that we know and love in London.

My other original correspondent is very busy now for she is married and the mother of a small son of whom she is very proud.

With every good wish to you and to *The Beacon*, believe me

Very sincerely yours,  
JOYCE PEARSON.

GRIFFIN APARTMENTS,  
1059 EAST FIRST ST.,  
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA.

Dear Miss Buck:—I am eleven years old and am in the fourth grade. I belong to the Unitarian Sunday school and would like to join the Club. Rev. Mr. Fairfield is our minister and my teacher is Mrs. Heasley. Our Sunday school has entered upon a vigorous campaign for securing new members. The sides are divided into the Reds and Blues. I belong to the Blues. The Reds are ahead.

Yours truly,  
ELIZABETH S. CARSON.

### Our Little Neighbors in Other Lands

BY THE EDITOR

THERE has come to the Editor's office a magazine named *The Junior Red Cross Monthly*, published in Prague, which, as many of our children know, is in Czecho-Slovakia. It is a very attractive number with a colored cover illustration and delightful pictures which the Editor can read, although she could not have read the stories and verse but for the fact that an English translation was inserted in the magazine. This is sent to us with greetings to the members of the Beacon Club from K. Weller.

The cover illustration is a circle of children of all lands and of all colors, white, red, yellow and brown, in their native costumes, hand in hand, encircling the world in a joyous dance. The motto under it is one in which the members of the Beacon Club and all readers of our paper may join: "The children of all nations unite in love and labor for humanity." The boys and girls in our own church schools and homes will, we are sure, want to join hands with the other children of the world and do their share toward making this earth of ours a happy place for all. If we feel ourselves to be friends of children everywhere and want the best for them, as we want it for ourselves, we shall do for every child what we would have every child do for us.

### Church School News

**C**HANNING CHURCH, Newton, Mass., devotes its calendar for October to the subject of religious education. It contains an announcement from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the minister, Rev. Chester A. Drummond, as to the purposes of the church in maintaining a school of religion. The message "To the Church School Teacher" by Dr. William I. Lawrance, is quoted as

is also a pamphlet from the Unitarian Laymen's League on our duty to the coming generation. The curriculum of the school is described and the graded course of study is printed in full on the last page of the calendar. Such care as this will not only instruct members of the church as to their work in religious education, but will undoubtedly awaken a new interest in the subject and secure more teachers and officers for the church school.

The minister of the First Unitarian Church of Nashville, Tenn., Rev. George B. Spurr, sends in this report of the opening of the church school: "Our church school began work for the new year September 24th. Nearly every day for the two weeks preceding that date, the mercury has gone over ninety degrees and on the 24th it was ninety-two. However, it is an advantage to start and then when cooler days come we are ready for work. We have had the usual summer list of losses caused by removals from the city. One teacher and two pupils have gone, but in spite of this loss there is every reason to suppose we shall have a better school than we had last year. We do not have the slightest difficulty in finding excellent teachers. Our treasury is actually in good conditions with nearly \$40 in the bank. You see we begin the year with hope."

### Our Honor Roll

Pupils who have brought new members to their church school:

Frances Little      John Johnston  
Norma Jones      Joe Ritchie  
of the school of the Fourth Unitarian Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Carol Ann B. Borland  
Grieg McRitchir  
of the Unitarian Church of Alameda, Cal.  
Edwin J. Putzell, Jr. (9), and Robert S. Soule, Jr. (13) have attended the school of the First Unitarian Church of New Orleans, La., for two years without missing a Sunday.

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA VIII.

I am composed of 43 letters and am a question we should ask ourselves.

My 33, 37, 28 is a vegetable.  
My 24, 23, 17 is an insect.  
My 41, 15, 25, 14 is a bird of prey.  
My 3, 39, 19, 40, 26 is a young man.  
My 29, 5, 11, 42 is Christmas time.  
My 1, 12, 8, 36 is a pigeon.  
My 4, 32, 16 is a grain.  
My 10, 2, 35, 22 is a flower.  
My 6, 18, 30, 21, 9 is a loop of rope.  
My 31, 43, 38 is a vase.  
My 20, 34, 27 is to regret.  
My 13 begins an exclamation.

D. H.

### ENIGMA IX.

I am composed of 14 letters.

My 10, 5, 7, 9 is a measurement of wood.  
My 4, 6, 12, 3, is a metal.  
My 1, 2, 3, 8, is a month.  
My 11, 5, 13, 14, is a boy's nickname.  
My whole is a helpful organization for boys and girls.

J. W.

### ADDITIONS AND SUBTRACTIONS

Take a fish; add to devour, subtract to defraud, add roofing material, add a male child, subtract what you get in school, and the resulting letters will spell the name of a famous general.

The Target.

### A DIAMOND

1. A consonant.
2. A domestic animal.
3. Burdens.
4. A number.
5. A consonant.

E. A. C.

### PRINTER'S PI

t'sI aseey ot gluah chvnn cht seisk rae lbue  
nAd tch nsu si niilnsg rrbgthi;  
seY, aseey ot ghaul nweh rovuy driensf rea rute  
dAn s'recht pipnseah ni s'githi;  
uBt nweh oeph ash fyde dna teh ssiek era rayg.  
nAd eht fdreins fo eht spta vauhe etunrd wyaa,  
hA, neht, ndiede, t'si a s'reho tfea  
oT onucrej a msej ni het cefa of fdetae.

FIRELIGHT.

### TWISTED COUNTRIES

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| 1. Naacad. | 6. Gumilbe.  |
| 2. Suiaar. | 7. Aygreemn. |
| 3. Crneaf. | 8. Tdcoslan. |
| 4. Dniad.  | 9. Gealndn.  |
| 5. Pnaia.  | 10. Racidu.  |

H. E. F.

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 3

ENIGMA IV.—Love is the fulfilling of the law.  
ENIGMA V.—Learn to stand in awe of thyself.  
HIDDEN NEW ENGLAND TOWNS AND CITIES.—1. Windsor. 2. Castine. 3. Belfast. 4. Lewiston. 5. Manchester. 6. Bath. 7. Medford. 8. Rutland. 9. Franklin. 10. Augusta.

DIVIDED WORDS.—1. Bugbear. 2. Bulkhead. 3. Peanut. 4. Paperweight.

## THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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